

Message Text

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ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 EA-12 ACDA-12 AGRE-00 AID-05
CEA-01 CEQ-01 CG-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DLOS-09
DODE-00 DOTE-00 EB-08 EPA-04 SOE-02 DOE-15 FMC-02
TRSE-00 H-02 INR-10 INT-05 IO-14 JUSE-00 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 NSF-02 OMB-01 PA-02 PM-05 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-20 /179 W
-----079277 292131Z /21

R 282145Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6235
INFO /USODC WASHDC
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY MEXICO

UNCLAS GUAYAQUIL 1173

MEXICO FOR RFO

USDOC FOR NOAA

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EFIS EC
SUBJ: ECUADOREAN FISHING ASSOCIATION MOVES TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVE FISHIN
G
ZONE

REF: GUAYAQUIL 1132

1. MORNING PRESS CONTAINED REPORT STATING LUIS CHACON,
PRES. ECUADOREAN FISHING ASSOCIATION HAS REQUESTED THE
MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY TO (1) TRANSFER THE
SUBSECRETARIAT FOR FISHERIES FROM QUITO TO GUAYAQUIL, (2) EXTEND
THE EXCLUSIVE FISHING ZONE FROM SIXTY MILES TO ONE HUNDRED MILES
AND (3) PROHIBIT THE EXPORTATION OF "PINCHAGUA" WHICH IS A
LOCAL SARDINE TYPE FISH. THE REQUEST ALSO ASKED FOR RESTRICTING
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THE NUMBER OF FISHING LICENSES TO FOREIGN BOATS, PARTICULARLY LONG-
LINE BOATS; THIS IN EFFECT MEANS THE JAPANESE. CHACON IS IN THE
U.S. AND NOT AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT.

2. COINCIDENTALLY THE MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY
CAME TO GUAYAQUIL TODAY WITH A VIEW TO DISCUSSING TRANSFERRING THE
SUB-SECRETARIAT FOR FISHERIES TO GUAYAQUIL. THIS OFFICE WAS

CREATED IN 1972 AND IT WAS ALWAYS CONSIDERED THAT ONE DAY IT WOULD BE LOCATED IN THIS CITY. A DECREE ALREADY AWAITS THE MINISTER'S SIGNATURE TO MAKE THIS HAPPEN, ACCORDING TO THE PRESS.

3. EXTENDING THE RESERVED FISHING ZONE TO ONE HUNDRED MILES WOULD BE A SEVERE BLOW TO THE FOREIGN VESSELS WHO PURCHASE LICENSES TO FISH IN ECUADORS CLAIMED TWO HUNDRED MILE TERRITORIAL ZONE SINCE THESE WATERS CONTAIN THE BEST FOOD SOURCES FOR THE HIGHLY MIGRATORY TUNA WHICH ARE CURRENTLY REPORTED TO BE APPROACHING THEIR TRADITIONAL FEEDING GRAOUNDS OFF THE MOUTH OF THE GULF OF GUAYAQUIL. SUCH AN EXTENSION IS LIKELY TO BRING OUT CRIES FROM U.S. TUNA BOAT OPERATORS WHO WOULD NORMALLY BUY LICENSES IN ORDER TO AVOID CONFLICT IN THESE WATERS. THEY MAY DEMAND RETALIATORY MEASURES FROM THE U.S. CONGRESS.

4. IT HAS LONG BEEN A PLAN OF THE ECUADOREAN GOVERNMENT TO EXPAND THE NATIONAL FISHING CAPABILITY BY BUILDING ONE OR TWO FAIRLY EXTENSIVE FISHING COMPLEXES WHERE THE VESSELS COULD "HOMEPORT," BE BUILT, BE REPAIRED, AND HAVE FOOD PROVISIONING AND COLD STORAGE FACILITIES. THERE IS A STRONG LOCAL DESIRE FOR THE ECUADOREAN FLEET TO "ENTER THE BIG TIME," I.E. HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL FLEET OF VESSELS ABOVE 200 GRT WITH QUICK FREEZING CAPACITY AND CRUISING CAPABILITY TO FISH OUTSIDE OF TERRITORIAL WATERS. SOME OWNERS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF ACQUIRING SUCH VESSELS AT THE PRESENT TIME. THE FISHING ASSOCIATION IS ASKING FOR THE DUTY FREE IMPORTATION OF SUCH MACHINES AND EQUIPMENT.

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5. THE ASSOCIATION IS ALSO ASKING FOR A RESTRICTION OF ARTESANAL FISHING AND THE EXPANSION OF FISH MEAL FACTORIES. THE ARTESANAL FISHERMEN ARE SWEAPING THE SHORES CLEAN OF THE SMALL FISH (INCLUDING PINCHAGUA) UPON WHICH THE LARGER FISH FEED; THIS HAS A TELLING EFFECT ON THE GAME FISHING AND TUNA FISHING. ECUADOR PRIDES ITSELF ON ITS MARLIN AND SAILFISH SPORTS FISHING. THE SUBSECRETARIAT FAVORS EXPANDED ARTESANAL FISHING BUT UNDER MORE CONTROLLED CONDITIONS.

6. MORE EXTENSIVE REPORTING ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FISHING INDUSTRY TO FOLLOW.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FISHERIES, FISHING LIMITS, FISHING REGULATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978GUAYAQ01173
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780269-0910
Format: TEL
From: GUAYAQUIL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780613/aaaaaksp.tel
Line Count: 107
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: a2454f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION OES
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 GUAYAQUIL 1132
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2182968
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ECUADOREAN FISHING ASSOCIATION MOVES TO EXTEND EXCLUSIVE FISHIN G ZONE
TAGS: EFIS, EC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a2454f7e-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014